

ADP spending in Jul-Aug lowest in 16 years

STAR BUSINESS REPORT

Implementation of the Annual Development Programme (ADP) in the first two months of the current fiscal year has reached its lowest point in at least 16 years, with about Tk 5,715 crore being spent during the period.

This means just 2.36 percent of the total outlay for FY26 has been used during the July-August period, according to data from the Implementation Monitoring and Evaluation Division (IMED),

published yesterday.

During this period, the utilisation of both state funds and foreign loans declined.

Of these, spending from foreign funds fell to about Tk 2,501 crore, while government funds amounted to Tk 2,747 crore, down from Tk 3,241 crore a year earlier.

The slowdown comes despite the government rolling out a reduced, austerity-focused ADP for the current fiscal year.

Planning Adviser Wahiduddin Mahmud, speaking after a meeting

of the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (Ecenec) in August, expressed concern over the implementation rate.

"I reviewed the July figures. Implementation stood at less than 1 percent, lower than last year. This is a worrying sign," he said.

Nearly 27 ministries and divisions could not cross 1 percent in the first two months of the current fiscal year.

Of these, around five entities did not open their expenditure

books.

Among the top 15 recipients of allocations, the Ministry of Science and Technology secured the top position, utilising 10.75 percent of its allocation, followed by the Energy and Mineral Resources Division with 5.94 percent.

On the other hand, health-related sectors lagged significantly, with the Medical Education and Family Welfare Division reporting an implementation rate of merely 0.005 percent, and the Health Services Division 0.50 percent.

After ICDs, Ctg port hikes

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supply, crane charges, berthing, loading and unloading containers and delivering goods.

CPA charges a fee for each of these services, which together make up the port's tariff.

This is the first large-scale revision of CPA charges since 1986. In 2007-08, the port authority increased fees for five major services, including tugboats, water supply, wharf rent, container storage and container stuffing and unstuffing.

THE NEW RATES

According to the gazette, container transport fees have risen the most.

The average charge per twenty foot equivalent unit has jumped from Tk 11,849 to Tk 16,243, an increase of Tk 4,395 per container.

Fees on imported containers have gone up by Tk 5,720, while export containers cost an extra Tk 3,045.

The largest single increase is for loading and unloading containers from ships, which has risen from \$43.40 (about Tk 5,282) to \$68, an increase of \$24.60 (nearly Tk 3,000).

As the tariffs are calculated in US dollars, charges could climb further if the dollar strengthens.

Spread across the weight of goods, the average fee per kilogramme for containerised cargo has increased from Tk 1.28 to Tk 1.75, an increase of nearly 37 percent.

Around 60 percent of imports at Chattogram port are handled at the outer anchorage. These cargoes will face smaller rises as they are not loaded or unloaded at the port jetties.

BUSINESSSES WORRY OVER COSTS, COMPETITIVENESS

A n w a r - u l - A l a m Parvez, president of the Bangladesh Chamber of Industries (BCI), said the rise in charges has imposed an extra burden on businesses.

"The new port tariff structure will increase the cost of doing business and raise production expenses for domestic manufacturers," he said.

"At the same time, exporters will lose competitiveness against their peers in the global market," Parvez told The Daily Star.

He said the hike comes at a particularly difficult moment as the country prepares to graduate from LDC status and lose trade benefits.

"Entrepreneurs are now forced to bear unexpected expenses because of inefficiency in port operations, which already cause significant delays in releasing goods," he said, urging the authorities to review the decision.

Nasir Uddin Chowdhury, former vice president of the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association (BGMEA), said they had requested the government to defer the tariff hike for a year, but this was rejected.

He accused the government of being "intent on transferring most port jetties to foreign operators."

The tariff hike may have been designed to make port operations look more profitable for them [foreign operators], as they stand to gain the bulk of the additional revenue," he added.

CPA Secretary Omar

Faruk said that although traders had requested a suspension of the increased tariff, it was ultimately not possible to accommodate that request.

Reiterating the port's position, he argued that charges at Chattogram Port are still much lower compared to ports in neighbouring countries. "The government has likely taken this into consideration."

He added that while the new rates came into effect yesterday, it could take a few more days for full implementation.

On July 24, the finance ministry approved the tariff hike, prompting objections from port users and a meeting at the Ministry of Shipping on August 25.

At the meeting chaired by Shipping Adviser Brig Gen (Retd) M Sakkhan Hussain, businesses again pressed for gradual increases to protect the country's competitiveness.

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He warned that foreign shipping lines may have no option but to raise freight charges as well, which would hit the country's foreign trade.

Yunus, IMF chief

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exposed to natural disasters, with projected damage from tropical cyclones expected to reach between 1.5 and 6 percent of GDP by 2050.

Such events could disrupt economic activity, weaken the currency, strain reserves, and increase public debt, disproportionately affecting the poor and vulnerable.

The Bangladesh Climate Development Platform (BCDP), established to scale up climate finance, is currently in its inception phase as of early 2025.

The existing RSF arrangements play a crucial role in helping Bangladesh reduce long term risks associated with climate change, and they acted as a catalyst for additional climate finance, according to the IMF document.

The successful

implementation of RSF reform measures also plays an important role in this context, while reform measures remain critical to closing the climate financing gap, it said.

The current annual c i m a t e - r e l a t e d government spending stands below 1 percent of GDP compared to the need of 3.4 percent of GDP over the next 15 years, according to World Bank data.

Alongside financial support, the IMF will continue providing technical assistance for reforms in the National Board of Revenue (NBR) and banking sectors.

In line with the IMF's guidance, Bangladesh Bank has initiated the merger of five banks: First Security Islami Bank, Social Islami Bank, Union Bank, Global Islami Bank, and EXIM Bank.

Taskforce proposes

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He added that the taskforce's focus was on raising the quality and transparency of Bangladesh's statistics to global standards, rather than forming a commission.

The report instead sets out specific measures to protect the independence of statistical work, from preparation and analysis to publication, through institutional and legal safeguards.

Planning Adviser Mahmud made a similar comment, stating, "There are many definitions of independence, and that needs to be understood. Simply forming a commission does not solve everything. We already have commissions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission and the Human Rights Commission."

He added, "The real issue is not the commission itself, but transparency and accountability in its work. Do those leading

it have the necessary competence? To whom are they accountable, and do they have the capacity to deliver? Within this lies the question of independence, but at what level and in what manner?"

The report, he said, proposes realistic steps to address these elements.

The taskforce also recommended amending the Statistics Act 2013 to safeguard the proposed body's autonomy in technical decisions, such as data validation and release, thereby protecting official statistics from administrative or political interference.

To tackle chronic institutional weaknesses, the report suggests doubling the number of organisational wings from eight to 16 and creating 437 new upazila level posts to strengthen grassroots data collection.

It also proposes unifying cadre and non-cadre services under a single professional track to improve career progression for statisticians.

Unified instant

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The BB has already made it mandatory for all licensed businesses to display QR codes at their shops, adding that people will be encouraged to use digital payments directly instead of withdrawing cash.

"Our goal is to reduce cash usage at both ends, and we want to promote digital QR payments in shops, restaurants, and marketplaces," said Mansur.

Delivering the keynote address at the discussion, Arief Hossain Khan, executive director of the payment systems department of BB, said three major players – banks, MFS providers, and microfinance institutions – play a key role in financial inclusion.

Khan said a robust, government-backed, unified platform with a

simplified user experience is vital for an interoperable payment system.

Jason Lamb, deputy director of the Gates Foundation, and Snigdha Ali, Bangladesh country lead of the interoperable payment system of the Gates Foundation, also spoke at the discussion.

In the second session of the programme, panellists discussed the opportunities, challenges, and priorities for inclusive instant payment systems (IIPS) in Bangladesh.

In the panel discussion, Mohammad Muslim Chowdhury, chairman of Sonali Bank; Maj Gen (retd) Sheikh Md Monirul Islam, chief external and corporate affairs officer of bKash; Shah Zia Ul Haque, additional director of the Bangladesh Bank; and others spoke.

Speed up labour law

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tripartite talks and that the remaining issues were expected to be resolved through further dialogue.

He added there were no objections to supporting International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions. Bangladesh exports goods worth more than \$8 billion to the US each year and imports about \$2 billion, leaving a

Gold pauses for breath

REUTERS

for future policy decisions," said Ricardo Evangelista, senior analyst at ActivTrades.

Last week, data showed US consumer prices increased by the most in seven months in August amid higher costs for housing and food, though a surge in first-time applications for jobless benefits last week kept the Federal Reserve on track to cut rates on Wednesday.

Traders are pricing in a near-certain 25 basis point (bps) cut to the Fed's key interest rate at the conclusion of the two-day policy meeting on September 17, with a small chance of a 50 bps reduction, according to CME FedWatch tool, opens new tab.

Non-yielding bullion, often considered a safe-haven asset during broader uncertainty, tends to perform well in a low-interest-rate environment.



Bangladesh Power Development Board

Central Secretariat

WAPDA Building (1st Floor), Motijheel, Dhaka

www.bpdb.gov.bd

Memo No. 27.11.0000.101.14.079.25-2337

Date: 14/09/2025

Request for Bids (RFB)

For

Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District (Without Prequalification)

(Single Stage Two Envelope Bidding Process)

Employer: Bangladesh Power Development Board

Project: Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District

Contract title: Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District Project (Solar power plant with Battery Back-up and associated distribution system) on Turn-key Basis

Country: Bangladesh

Loan No. / Credit No. / Grant No.: IDA Grant No. E325-30

RFB No: 27.11.0000.101.14.079.25-2337

Issued on: 14/09/2025

1. The Bangladesh Power Development Board has received financing from the World Bank towards the cost of the Host and Rohingya Enhancement of Lives Project (HELP), and intends to apply part of the proceeds toward payments under the Contract for Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District, Bangladesh. For this contract the Borrower shall process the payments using the Direct Payment Disbursement method, as defined in the World Bank's Disbursement Guidelines for Investment Project Financing.

2. The Bangladesh Power Development Board now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District, Bangladesh ("the Facilities").

3. Bidding will be conducted through international competitive procurement using a Request for Bids (RFB) as specified in the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers", fifth edition, September, 2023 ("Procurement Regulations") and is open to all eligible Bidders defined in the Procurement Regulations.

4. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the office of the Project Director, Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District, Level-4, Bidut Bhaban, Dhaka, Bangladesh and inspect the Bidding document during office hours [i.e. 09:00am to 17:00pm] at the address given below. Bidding Document is also available at IPDB website i.e. <http://www.bpdb.gov.bd>. However, the web version of the bidding document is for information purpose only.

5. The Bidding document in English may be purchased by interested eligible Bidders upon the submission of a written application to the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of BDT 12,000.00 or US\$ 100.00 from the office of the Project Director, Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District, Level-4, Bidut Bhaban, Dhaka, Bangladesh. The method of payment will be Pay Order or Demand Draft in favor of Project Director, Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District.

6. Bids must be delivered to the address below (as mentioned in the Data Sheet of the Bidding Document) on or before **11:00am on 30/10/2025**. Electronic bidding will not be permitted. Late bids will be rejected. The outer Bid envelopes marked "**ORIGINAL BID**", and the inner envelopes marked "**TECHNICAL PART**" will be publicly opened in the presence of the Bidders' designated representatives and anyone who chooses to attend at the address below on **30/10/2025 at 11:30am** in the BPDB's Board Room, WAPDA Bhaban, Motijheel C/A Area, Dhaka. All envelopes marked "**FINANCIAL PART**" shall remain unopened and will be held in safe custody of the Employer until the second public Bid opening.

7. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security. The amount of Bid Security will be BDT 30.00 million or US\$ 0.25 million or an equivalent amount in any freely convertible foreign currency.

8. Attention is drawn to the Procurement Regulations requiring the Borrower to disclose information on the successful bidder's beneficial ownership, as part of the Contract Award Notice, using the Beneficial Ownership Disclosure Form as included in the bidding document.

9. The address referred to above is:

Project Director

Electrification at Bhashanchar of Noakhali District

Bangladesh Power Development Board

Level-4, 1, Abdul Gani Road, Bidut Bhaban

Email: pd.eob.bpdb@gmail.com

Md. Rashedul Hoque Prodhan

Secretary